

Finding Rosendale –Public Outreach Plan

INTRODUCTION

This Outreach Plan is intended to help clarify the methods by which the public will be informed of and engaged in the “Finding Rosendale” Project. This plan will also clarify and define the responsibilities of the project coordinator (Ulster County) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the project consultant team of Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C. and W Design.

The first section of this document therefore includes a list of stakeholders. This section is then followed by ‘The Role of the Advisory Committee,’ which explains the tasks and responsibilities that they are charged with. Finally, the community participation and outreach process provides an explanation of the public outreach process to be employed, including an outline pertaining to the recommended number of community meetings as well as the purpose of those meetings.

STAKEHOLDERS

For the duration of this process, County staff, the project consultant team and the TAC will strive to interact with many different groups of people from a variety of backgrounds. These groups will likely include:

Elected Officials

These individuals perform a variety of tasks, including representing the community’s interests, administering local statutes and receipt/ownership of all project deliverables. Because of these factors it is important for elected officials to be actively engaged throughout the project. The type of elected officials involved may include (but are not limited to) the Ulster County agency representatives, Rosendale Supervisor and the Rosendale Town Council.

Community Groups

Community groups serve to inform the public and local officials of specific concerns and to advocate on behalf of those concerns. These groups can be informal, such as neighborhood associations or formally recognized entities. Among the local groups that will be important stakeholders are the Rosendale Main Street Association and the Women’s Studio Workshop.

Local Not-for-Profits

Local not-for-profits include the Wallkill Valley Land Trust and Mohonk Preserve who have a vested interest in the community and own property in the project area. The Wallkill Valley Land Trust and Mohonk Preserve are also engaged in wayfinding and have access to potential funding for project implementation.

Property Owners

Property owners will be encouraged to participate in the wayfinding project as there are many opportunities that may impact residents and business owners. The project will likely involve directing visitors and trail users between the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail, Rosendale Trestle, parking areas, and downtown. Such routing may include right-of-way acquisition. It will be important, therefore, to keep property owners engaged and informed throughout the project.

Agencies

It is important to include local agency representatives in outreach plans. Representatives from NYSDOT, DEC, Ulster County Planning Department, and Ulster County DPW among others can offer valuable stewardship when approvals and funding are needed for project implementation.

ROLE OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A technical advisory committee has been established in order to provide project oversight and to guide the preparation of Finding Rosendale – Town of Rosendale Circulation and Wayfinding Plan. TAC members include people from, but not limited to, each of the groups mentioned above. The consultant team, in conjunction with the County, will be responsible for arranging meetings and preparing major project deliverables.

A TAC “kickoff meeting” was held on Wednesday, August 6, 2014 in order to explain the project’s intent and scope and to solicit initial input on a vision for the study area, including goals, objectives, opportunities and constraints. A summary of the tasks assigned to the TAC, working in conjunction with the planning consultant is as follows:

Fall 2014 tasks for the TAC and Consultant:

- Confirm project scope, schedule, and deliverables;
- Confirm objectives and delineate study area boundary;
- Exchange existing information pertaining to the study area;
- Establish contact information;
- Discuss public participation and outreach plan;
- Review and agree upon an initial draft project outline and the draft outreach plan, along with other project components;
- Provide oversight for the organization and scheduling of public meetings; and
- Prepare, update and maintain a community contact list.

Beyond completion of the above tasks, the TAC, in conjunction with the planning consultant, will be responsible for maintaining project oversight and monitoring project progress until completion, with a focus on the following key benchmarks:

- Review the information gathered from the public meetings;
- Review the draft Finding Rosendale Plan (as completed by the planning consultant);
- Support public meetings so that the public can review and provide input on the completeness and accuracy of the draft Finding Rosendale Plan;
- Approve the draft Plan after comments have been received from the public; and
- General oversight of the SEQRA process.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES

The outreach plan will offer an appropriate schedule and format to best inform the general public about the project as well as gather public input. Feedback relative to circulation and wayfinding as expressed by the community will shape the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the overall Finding Rosendale plan.

The geographic focus of the Finding Rosendale project will be along the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail from River Road Extension to the south to the Binnewater Road parking area to the north, incorporating connections to downtown Rosendale, the Town of Rosendale Recreation Center, and other nearby parking areas. The degree to which nearby parcels and other land resources can or should be included in the study area is subject to the discretion of the TAC.

Public Outreach

Public involvement is considered to be a central component that will directly influence the outcome and success of the project. Communicating project goals to project stakeholders will therefore be an important consideration. This project will develop and utilize a variety of tools and methods in order to assure that all interested parties receive adequate notice of project events and important project benchmarks and are made aware of draft materials that require review.

The following tools and methods will be used in order to achieve this goal of effective and engaging public involvement:

Community Contact List

The TAC, in conjunction with the planning consultant, will prepare, update and maintain a community contact list. This list will include the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of individuals and organizations with a stake in the project. The list will be used on a regular basis to keep the contacts informed of overall project progress.

Communication and Outreach Tools

It will be the goal of TAC and planning consultant to communicate project goals, concepts, ideas and other issues to stakeholders in a clear and effective graphical manner. Appropriate communications formats and methods will be used to facilitate discourse with the public. These communication methods will utilize a mix of graphic and narrative approaches.

Public Notification

The project team will discuss and develop adequate measures that will provide all members of the public with adequate notice of project events and important benchmarks. This may include the creation of flyers for local distribution, direct mailings of print materials, email notifications, website postings, and press releases to be issued to local media (with an emphasis on media outlets that have a large local circulation).

Project Website

The consultant team will provide data for a project website to be maintained by the Ulster County Planning Department. TAC meeting agendas and summaries as well as all related project materials will be posted in a timely fashion and be updated regularly. Draft documents, power point presentations, event notices and other media will also be posted and disseminated through this medium.

e-Newsletters

The consultant team will generate full color quarterly e-newsletters, in digital and hard-copy formats, to communicate progress updates and provide a summary of project deliverables. A total of four (4) e-newsletters will be provided by the consultant team.

Mobile Workshops

The consultant team can create and provide project graphic and information boards utilizing existing deliverables for use as mobile workshops and displays. The displays can include comment forms and be placed at key local community locations such as the library, theater lobby, etc.; or can be placed at key locations during special events.

Visioning Process

The TAC, in conjunction with the planning consultant, will be responsible for creating a Draft Needs and Opportunities Assessment Plan for the proposed project area, including the goals and objectives for the future redevelopment of the project area. The Draft Needs and Opportunities Assessment Plan will be guided by information from the public obtained during the initial public meeting/workshop. This will be an iterative process, one that will require considerable discussion and feedback within the TAC and with the community at large through a series of public workshops, the schedule and format of which is explained below.

Note: The specific formats of public meetings/workshops are subject to TAC input. The formats outlined below are intended as a general framework from which to build upon through TAC discussion.

Public Meeting/Workshop #1:

The first public meeting will be scheduled for November 2014. The intent of this initial public “open house” will be to educate the public about the Finding Rosendale project including the draft project boundary which will be open to discussion. The public will be solicited to provide input on subjects such as community goals and objectives and to discuss possible barriers and prospects regarding linkages between parking, recreational resources, community gateways, and downtown. Upon completion of this initial meeting the TAC will have public input regarding the project boundary area and will also have information to guide the Draft Needs and Opportunities Assessment Plan.

Refreshments will be provided at the meeting in an effort to encourage the participation of families and other residents with busy schedules. The workshop can take place in an “open house” format, providing the public with an opportunity to casually visit and discuss the project with staff and committee members.

Public Meeting/Workshop #2:

The second public workshop will be held in January 2015. The purpose of this workshop will be to sharpen or clarify the collective vision of the community. The format will focus on reviewing and applying the information gathered from Public Workshop No. 1 and present all of the data, findings, and preliminary recommendations for public input. The TAC and the planning consultant will attempt to seek appraisal of any draft products from targeted local community leaders, neighborhood groups, landowners, and other identified relevant stakeholders. The structure of this meeting can remain the same as Public Workshop No. 1 or follow a variety of other formats, depending on the amount of information that is needed.

Some other possible formats include:

- Key contact interviews
- Group focus meetings (targeted toward specific groups, such as business owners, area homeowners, area youth/student leaders, etc.)
- Targeted version of break-out sessions utilized in the initial Public Workshop No. 1

If further follow-up meetings are deemed necessary after Public Workshops No. 1 and 2, the techniques and process used to gather additional information will be agreed upon by the TAC and the planning consultant.

Final Public Forum – Presentation and Review of Findings

A final public meeting will be held in spring 2015 with the intention of presenting project findings, which will be in the form of the draft Finding Rosendale Plan. The public will be given an opportunity to review and provide input on the completeness and accuracy of the draft wayfinding plan during an established public review period. The public will be urged to provide their input in their preferred format: either in person at the public forum or in writing before, during or after the public forum, either through letter correspondence or electronically.

Public comments received will be considered and incorporated into the final draft Finding Rosendale Plan, as necessary and appropriate. All final products will require TAC approval before submission to the Ulster County Transportation Council for final approval.

All public meetings will be advertised through one or more formats, including advance notice in selected local newspaper(s) and through a mix of other media, as necessary and appropriate.